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ABSTRACT

Connecticut is small, densely populated, and very urban; its residents are typically well educated and wealthy. The state's diverse economy allows it to ride through recessions with ease. Housing costs are so high, though, that some of the benefits of the high income levels are negated. The state's population is the fourth oldest in the nation mainly due to the small number of children. Moreover, the fastest growing portion of the population is made up of people over 85, which could force future trade-offs between programs for children and those for senior citizens unless some action is taken now. Connecticut's youth population has declined sharply for a decade, but a turnaround has already begun in the early elementary grades. The state has a diverse and flexible educational system from kindergarten through graduate school, but it is not coordinated in a particularly effective way. The higher education system seems to be meeting the needs of Connecticut's citizens. Some encouraging recent developments suggest increasing articulation and collaboration across the educational segments in the state. Additionally, promising starts have been made on cooperation among business, public schools, and higher education, as well as on the state's minority advancement program. (22 references) (KM)

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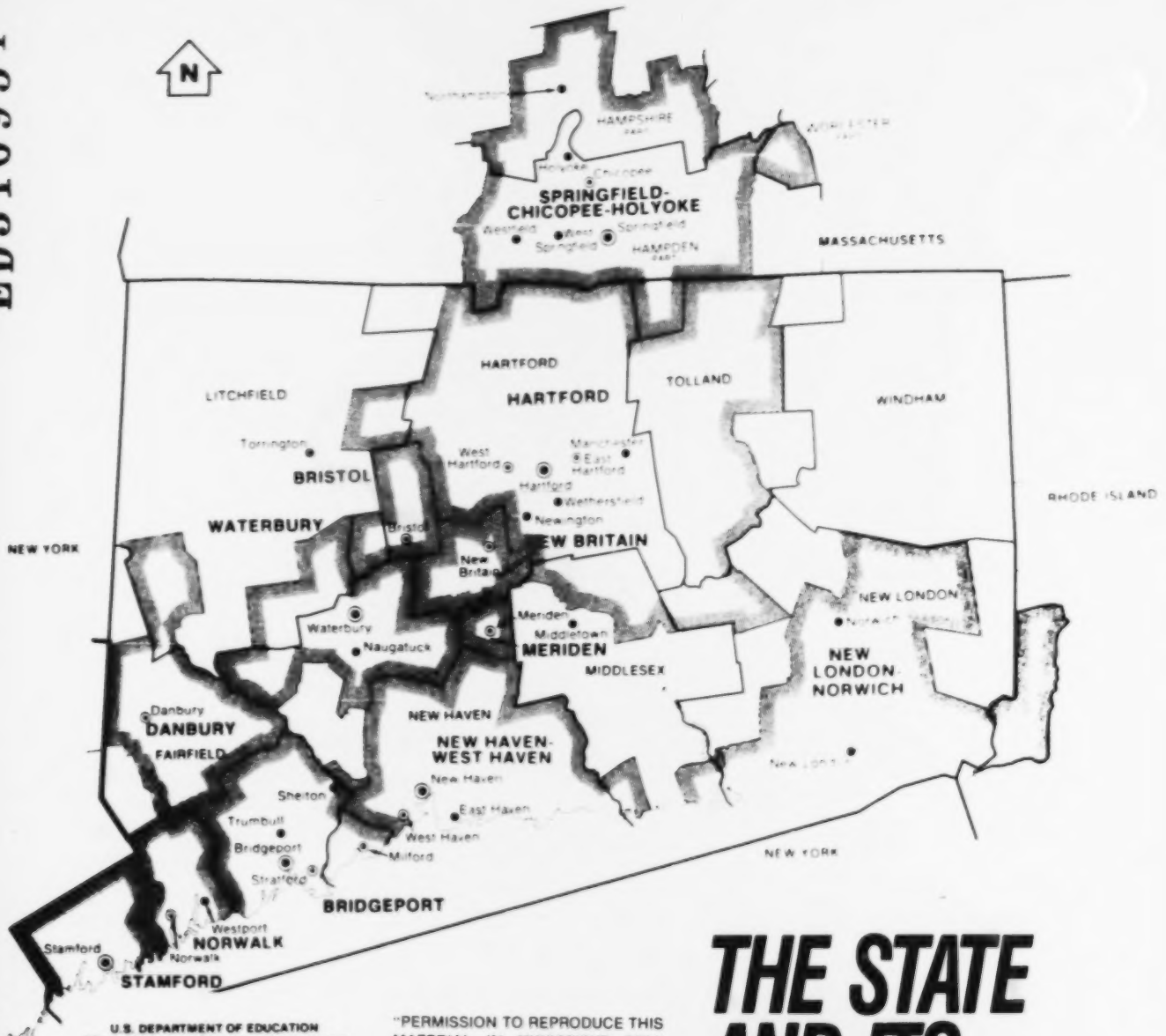

THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

BY HAROLD L. HODGKINSON

EA 021 766

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The report brings together a wide variety of different materials having to do with Connecticut. This integration could not have been accomplished without a computer program called Super-File, which has been a joy to use.

Louise Clarke, Chief Administrative Officer at IEL, has become indispensable for her excellent supervision of the production process. Tony Browder's graphic designs have become a vital part of the publication.

Errors of fact or interpretation, however, remain the responsibility of the author.

Harold L. Hodgkinson
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COVER NOTE:

This unusual map of Connecticut shows how the state looks demographically. The thick lines indicate metropolitan areas (where 88 percent of the people live). You can also see how both Massachusetts and New York impinge on Connecticut! (The second largest metro area in Connecticut is Springfield—Chicopee—Holyoke, which is mostly in Massachusetts while New London-Norwich has partially slipped into Rhode Island.) Metropolitan development does not stop at state lines. This "people map" is the social equivalent of mountains, rivers and roads, and is becoming useful to politicians and marketers of products and services and even to educators!

CONNECTICUT:
THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

HAROLD L. HODGKINSON
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CONNECTICUT: THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Connecticut is a model example of the notion that small does *not* mean simple. The state is very wealthy, very well-educated, very old both in history and in average age (a result of very low fertility rates), very urban, very political, very accomplished. From Connecticut has come Mark Twain, who wrote *Huckleberry Finn* there and made sport of the state in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Harriet Beecher Stowe, P.T. Barnum, Benedict Arnold, Samuel Colt, who made the guns that helped to win the Revolutionary War (Connecticut has been big in defense contracts ever since), not to mention Nathan Hale.

In addition to people, there are other Connecticut firsts, including the first hamburger, the first telephone switchboard, and, most important for our discussion, the first American Ph.D. (Yale) and the first public school in 1640. Connecticut has been a state of tinkerers—Eli Whitney worked out his cotton gin there and along with Colt perfected the idea of interchangeable parts. However, social and political innovations are a little harder to locate. The state is possessed of great wealth, especially in the insurance companies in and around Hartford, and Fairfield County, where New York City executives can reside in comfort and where an increasing number of major corporations are locating for similar reasons.

Even though the existing state tax base is clearly regressive, emphasizing sales and property taxes which penalize the poor, additional sources of revenue have not developed. Even Ella Grasso, the first woman Governor to be elected on her own merits, was unable to develop a comprehensive income base to meet the state's needs. The real contradiction in Connecticut is between very open and clean government and inadequate financing for all forms of public activity. (Even after 1918, property ownership was necessary in order to vote in Connecticut.) But as the Yankees gave way to Catholics, and English shared the state with Italians and Jews, a sense of pluralism developed.

The relatively fierce independence of Connecticut's many small towns, the often untillable land (unless you are growing rocks), as well as the Yankee heritage and very strong corporations in both insurance and manufacturing have all contributed to the state's stability and economic conservatism. During the 1960s, urban renewal became a major agenda item in New Haven and Hartford, the latter led by Hartford's corporate leadership. Although the "Greater Hartford Process, Inc." would have to be declared only a modest success in the late sixties, companies have continued their efforts at urban renewal, resulting in Constitution Plaza and the downtown civic center, which, in spite of losing its roof in a snowstorm in the late seventies, has spurred some other major downtown renovation in Hartford.

The state's corporate leadership has been humane, innovative, and interested in urban renewal. John Filer, former CEO of Aetna, clearly stands out as a major figure in the state's agenda for urban redevelopment. The major problem left concerns relocation of the poor, minority and immigrant families who were uprooted during this effort at social betterment. Both Bridgeport and New Haven have engaged in major efforts at renewal, even when their economies were in desperate shape due to the manufacturing transitions that were underway.

As a result, Connecticut today sits proudly at the top of the Department of Commerce figures for per capita income leaders. (On other versions of the same measure, it drops to second.) The leaders are interesting in that the "Sun Belt," that predicted bundle of growth, is entirely missing from the top except for California:

Per Capita Income Leaders
April 1987

Connecticut	$19,208
New Jersey	$18,284
Alaska	$17,744
Massachusetts	$17,516
New York	$17,118
California	$16,588
New Hampshire	$15,922
Illinois	$15,420
Virginia	$15,374

The states that comprise the "Sun Belt" are all at or near the bottom of the economic development heap, except California, while the supposedly dead or moribund states of the New England and the Mid-Atlantic areas are leading

the nation. Moral: never underestimate states that have an educated workforce, diversified economies, small geographic size and high densities, strong governors, citizens who vote, and companies that stay because they are making profits.

An additional advantage for Connecticut comes from excellent and current sources of information about the state's problems, such as *The Connecticut Workplace to the Year 2000*, *The Changing World of Connecticut's Children*, as well as *Meeting the Challenge: Condition of Education in Connecticut, 1986*. It is clear that in terms of information and citizen participation, Connecticut desires to *stay* on top in many areas. Indeed, speaking to the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education is always interesting—passive, dependent people are simply not present at the meeting. Politics are intense, open and very energetic. Commissioner of Education, Gerald Tirozzi, has managed to funnel this localized energy toward state concerns in a surprising number of instances.

Before moving to a discussion of the educational system, let's look first at a general statistical picture of Connecticut:

CONNECTICUT'S PROFILE*

1980 Population	**25th**	**3,107,000**		
1987 Population	**	**3,200,000**		
1985 Population Density	**4th**	**651 people per square mile**		
Black Population	**24th**	**217,000**	**7%**	
Hispanic Population	**13th**	**124,000**	**4%**	
Foreign Born	**8th**	**	**8.6%**	
Born in Another State	**17th**	**	**42%**	
		1980	**1985**	
Population Over 65	**18th**	**11.7%**	**13%**	**14th**
Population Under 18	**46th**	**26.5%**	**23.8%**	**
Birth Rate	**47th**	**13.4 per 1,000 population in 1984**		
Median Age	**4th**	**32 years in 1980 34 years in 1986**		
Life Expectancy	**12th**	**75.12 years**		
Working Women	**9th**	**53.6%**		
College Graduates	**3rd**	**20.7%**		
Married Couple Households	**31st**	**61.1%**		
Owner Occupied Housing	**40th**	**63.9%**		
Housing Value	**5th**	**$77,700**		

*1980 Data Unless Specified
**Data Not Available

This profile shows a small state in terms of geography with a dense population, 88 percent of whom live in the state's 12 metropolitan areas. (Population density of 651 per square mile may seem high, but New Jersey is over 1,000, a figure that ranks with Japan in terms of density.) The notion of Connecticut as a state of small towns has

to join the ranks of major American myths. Growth rates are slow, and much of it is caused by people moving into the state. Certainly the extraordinarily low fertility rates are not adding much to the population. Minority populations are well below the national average at 11 percent, but minority public school enrollments were 22.4 percent in 1986, suggesting that the state's adult minority component will double in the next decade or so. Immigrants, however, will increase at a much slower rate. Although the state has a high percentage of immigrants, these tend to be older persons who came to Connecticut mostly from European nations, not from South America and Asia. This could change as Connecticut appeals to more young immigrants—the Hispanic population in Fairfield County is increasing rapidly.

Connecticut has the fourth oldest population, not because it has so many old folks, but because of its very low number of children. The same reason exists for the other "old" states—Rhode Island, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and Massachusetts—but not Florida, which has lots of older people as well as few young ones. Given that the fastest growing segment of Connecticut's population is people over 85 (up 59 percent from 1970 to 1986), one can easily see that an increasing number of residents are moving beyond the childbearing years. (Even black populations are declining in Connecticut, but because they are declining *less* than whites, blacks still represent an increasing percentage of Connecticut's youth.) That will turn around in the next few years—*American Demographics*, January, 1988, announced that although Connecticut's school-age population (age 5-17) declined by 13.9 percent from 1980-86, the very young (under five) group increased by 13 percent during the same years. School populations have already begun a gradual increase, with Kindergarten through grade five increasing in 1984-85. Although the numbers are not yet available, this very young cohort will be at least 25 percent minority and probably more.

Most Connecticut indicators lead to high income—lots of women in the work place increasing the number of two income households, a *very* large population with college degrees, and a large middle-aged population moving into their peak earning years. However, housing *costs* are so high that a large amount of income is needed to cover housing, leaving less for discretionary purposes. (That is one major reason why the percent of owner-occupied housing is so low in the state and why so few people move to Connecticut even with the high per capita income figures.) Even during periods of economic difficulty, the Connecticut unemployment level was among the lowest in the nation. While many of these measures suggest a state with no major problems, we will soon look at the issues of poverty and equity in Connecticut where there is still much to do.

Given low fertility rates, the major way the state changes is by people moving in and out. This analysis gives us another clue as to why the population is diversifying ethnically:

CONNECTICUT MIGRATION
1975-1980

	ALL	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
IN	325,213	281,402	21,686	27,121
OUT	345,300	317,175	19,499	10,005
NET	−20,000	−35,773	+2,187	+17,116

Here is a simple explanation for increased ethnic diversity—more whites moved out than in, while more Hispanics and blacks moved in than out! The same principle applies to Fairfield County, one of the richest in the nation:

FAIRFIELD COUNTY MIGRATION
1975-1980

	ALL	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
IN	129,736	115,429	6,986	9,868
OUT	136,936	126,691	7,199	4,096
NET	−7,200	−11,262	−213	+5,772

The combination of declining white populations *and* increasing minorities simply multiplies the trend line. And, because black and Hispanic populations are younger than whites and have a higher percentage of women in the child-bearing years, their fertility rates are higher.

Connecticut's twelve metropolitan areas have not seen the explosive suburban growth that has sucked jobs, homes and education away from core cities and to the suburbs. (Remember that the *second* largest metro area in Connecticut is Springfield—Chicopee—Holyoke! Metropolitan development does not stop neatly at state lines—the second largest metro area in Illinois is now St. Louis, while 20 percent of Cincinnati is in Kentucky. Even New London-Norwich is moving into Rhode Island.) Only Danbury, with a 32 percent suburban growth rate during 1970-1980 fit the national picture, and even there, suburban growth did not come *at the expense* of the core, which also grew at 16 percent. It may be that here is a good reason why the revitalization of Connecticut's cities has gone reasonably well—most of the city was still there. Compared to Detroit, Pittsburgh and even Baltimore, all of which lost jobs, homes, incomes and education to the suburbs, Connecticut's cities were much better off. The biggest danger for Connecticut's future growth may be increased intrusion from New York and Massachusetts, and some steps may be needed to deal with that problem.

Another clue to Connecticut's strategic success comes from the Connecticut business and workforce analysis. In the following table, the first column gives the percentage of the workforce in that area, the second compares the workforce distribution to the nation, the average being 100:

CONNECTICUT BUSINESSES AND WORKERS

	Percent	Index
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, MINING, FISHING	1.1	28
CONSTRUCTION	4.3	73
MANUFACTURING	31.0	138
TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS	5.6	77
RETAIL, WHOLESALE TRADE	18.2	89
FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE	8.0	133
BUSINESS, REPAIR, PERSONAL SERVICE	7.4	88
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	20.6	101
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	3.9	74

There are some excellent and some worrisome things in this profile, one worry being the low index on construction, one of the best indicators of future economic growth. The same is true for transportation and retail trades. The low agriculture index is actually favorable, given the problems in that industry. However, manufacturing is very high, an area in which some additional painful "downsizing" is probably still in the cards. The jewel in the crown is clearly the splendid score on the high end of the service economy—finance, insurance and real estate. But the state could clearly use some diversification, particularly in small business starts in services, construction and transportation. If Connecticut could "tinker" with new services as well as it has with manufacturing, the state's future would be assured!

Although this profile looks decidedly optimistic, another point needs to be made—in Connecticut, as in other states, the low end of the service economy is alive and growing. Although Connecticut is very high in engineers and finance managers, it is *also* very high in service jobs that do not pay well:

WHO DOES WHAT IN CONNECTICUT?
(Total 1980 Workforce—1,482,300)*

Finance managers	9,000
Accountants, auditors	17,600
Underwriters	1,100
Engineers, total	31,800
Assemblers	27,500
Physicians	7,500
Actuaries	900
Lawyers	8,300
Computer programmers	6,600
Secretaries	63,200
Fast food	59,100
Janitors	33,300

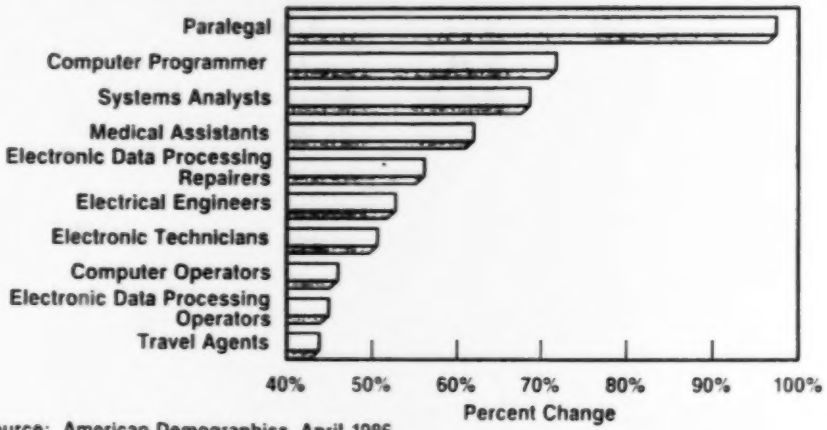
**Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, Winter, 1986–87

If one looks at the *new* jobs coming on stream, the jobs that will change the nature of the economy, there will be

fourteen new jobs for cashiers for every *one* job for a computer programmer, both in the nation and in Connecticut. We in education have long, intense discussions about the educational needs of future programmers, but seldom do we discuss the future educational needs of janitors, maids and cashiers, three job categories with very high rates of growth, and numbers of jobs. It is vital to understand the difference between the job categories with the highest *percentage of job growth* and the areas with the *largest number of new jobs*:

FASTEST GROWING JOBS IN TECHNICAL AREAS

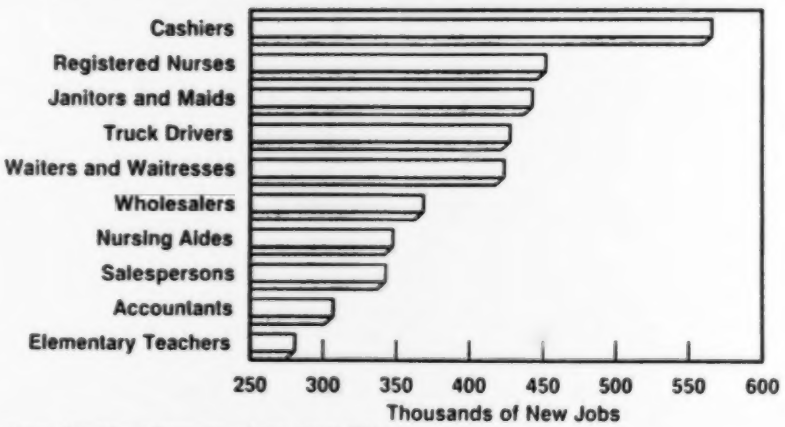
(Fastest Relative Growth, 1985 to 1995)



Source: American Demographics, April 1986

MOST NEW JOBS IN TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

(Fastest Absolute Growth, 1985 to 1995)



Source: American Demographics, April 1986

One final comment about jobs and Connecticut has to do with the new entrants into the Connecticut workforce. According to the (excellent) report, *The Connecticut Workplace to the Year 2000*, six of every ten net additions to the Connecticut labor force will be women, four out of ten will be minority group members. (Nationally, eight of ten new workers will be some combination of women, minority or immigrant.) Every year, Connecticut will add about 82,000 jobs. Of these, 25,000 will be in the two categories of "clerical" and "services," jobs which do not require much education or training. Normally, the workers at the low end of the service economy—janitors, clerks, maids, guards, cashiers—have been from poor and minority backgrounds.

If these 25,000 jobs each year continue to go to people who are disadvantaged, and no promotional structure is built into the low end of the service economy, then Connecticut will be *more* segregated by the year 2000, not less. Remember that in the U.S. in 1986, 3.5 million people worked full time, yet were eligible for federal poverty programs. The evidence is clear that the "middle" of the workforce is declining in numbers. Even though Connecticut is currently on top in per capita income, it may not continue, as the Connecticut population ages, demands for health and other services for the elderly increase, and the tax base comes from an increasing number of minimum wage jobs.

A couple of other areas need to be mentioned before we deal with the educational system. First, the state has a low rate of murder and rape for a densely populated state:

Connecticut Crime Rates per 100,000 Population

Murder:	*Rape:*	*Robbery:*
36th	40th	11th
4.7	21.6	218

Robbery rates are strongly related to per capita income levels, and almost anyone in Connecticut is worth robbing! One of the most important issues for Connecticut's future is the increasing amount of public funds that will be spent on jails—the number of inmates will grow by *one third* in Connecticut by 2000. With increased needs for education and programs for senior citizens, Connecticut could, with its unwillingness to develop new state income sources, be in serious financial trouble.

Although the divorce rate in Connecticut is low by national standards, there are still 444 divorces for every 1,000 marriages in the state. The state ranks 14th in abortions—there are 385 abortions for every 1,000 births in the state. (If that sounds high, consider New York State, with *666* abortions for every 1,000 births!) The demographic consequences of abortion are as vital as the ethical issues, but it's hard to keep them separate. Connecticut is one of ten states that did not report babies born out of wedlock for the 1980 Census. But in the very well done report, *The Changing World of Connecticut's Children*, we learn that in 1985, 9,353 babies were born out of wedlock in the state, about 20 percent of all births. Included are about one in every six white babies and almost three of every five non-white children. In a state with a declining percentage of its citizens who are young, these numbers are serious—in Connecticut, almost every kid has to succeed, as there are so few of them! As Commissioner Tirozzi has put it, "Equity begins at birth; it does not start at age five when a child enters kindergarten. Neither does learning end at age eighteen." (*The Changing World of Connecticut's Children*, p. 26).

These trends overlap in many ways. One of the reasons for Connecticut's very high per capita income is the number of women in the workforce outside the home. About 56 percent of women with children under 18 are in the Connecticut workforce. The figure will probably increase, putting even more pressure on Connecticut's resources for high quality daycare. In *The Changing World*, we learn that in 1986 there were about 57,000 spaces in child care centers and *185,000* school-age kids needing such care. In addition, 93,000 pre-school children in Connecticut were in need of daycare. From 1970 to 1980, even with major efforts at urban redevelopment, Connecticut's largest cities (Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport) got poorer. It is easy in a state with such high income levels to overlook those who have not shared in economic well-being, particularly the poor who are disproportionately female and minority—and *kids*. (In the U.S., ten percent of the poor are elderly while forty percent of the poor are children.) Although poverty is not a lifelong condition for all (white families can bounce in and out of poverty frequently, while minorities tend to stay in longer), the effects of long-term poverty on children is striking. Given the small number of people who migrate to Connecticut, the state's work force in the year 2000 *will* be made up of today's Connecticut youth, too many of whom are at risk of not fulfilling their potential.

We have taken this rather circuitous route to education because the system can be no better than its context. Between now and 2000, Connecticut will build far more jails than schools. Each prisoner costs the state more than $20,000 a year—enough to provide a Head Start-type program for *10* kids! Consider the fact that 80 percent of all jail cells are occupied by high school dropouts, and we may have completed the circle. Investing in the educational system *pays off*, particularly the focus on early childhood levels. Connecticut education programs are, above all else, the product of Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The recent history of Connecticut's public schools has been one of decline in enrolled students as well as a major change in ethnic composition. From a peak around 1970, Connecticut school enrollments have declined at twice the national rate:

SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS: U.S. AND CONNECTICUT, 1970 vs. 1982

	1970	1982	Net
U.S. Total Enrollment	45,909,000	39,643,000	−13.6%
Connecticut Total Enrollment	662,000	486,000	−26%
U.S. Grades 9-12	13,332,000	12,501,000	−6.2%
Connecticut Grades 9-12	175,000	150,000	−26%
U.S. Grades K-8	32,577,000	27,143,000	−16.7%
Connecticut Grades K-8	487,000	336,000	−31%

By 1985, U.S. school enrollments were increasing in elementary grades, while still declining in high school enrollments. (Some superintendents are laying off high school teachers and hiring elementary school staff at the same time.) Connecticut, on the other hand, continued to decline in both levels, but the decline has slowed, and increased birth rates in Connecticut at present have led to increases in school enrollments continuing into the 1990s, followed by a long decline as the year 2000 approaches. About half of Connecticut's teachers will have retired by the year 2000, but it is too early to forecast large teacher shortages.

A significant shift in ethnic background has taken place. Minority enrollments in Connecticut have increased from 15.1 percent in 1976 to 21.7 percent in 1985 and 22.4% in 1986. Certainly compared to Los Angeles this is not a major jump, but for stable Connecticut it is. Although black enrollments in Connecticut had declined until 1985, they are now increasing slightly, while white decline continues, meaning that a higher *percentage* of students is now black. Hispanic and Asian enrollments have increased in number, allowing their percentages to increase rapidly as white enrollments decline rapidly and blacks slowly.

The most accurate way to think of these factors is steadily declining white enrollments with relatively stable minority numbers but small increases in Hispanics. These trends move into schools from the bottom—minorities represent one in four kindergarten students and one of seven twelfth graders. Higher minority dropout figures also mean fewer minority students in the upper grades. In Connecticut, as in the U.S., minority students are concentrated in urban areas. In 1986, 74.8 percent of all students in Connecticut's five largest cities were minorities. (Indeed, many other metro areas have done much better than Hartford—New Haven in terms of the percentage of black households in the suburban areas, as well as the number of minority small business starts, both good indicators of increased *middle class* minority populations.)

Nonpublic school enrollments in Connecticut have remained virtually stable at 81,000 (about 14 percent of all students), for a decade or more, with a decline to 73,284 or 13.4 percent in 1986. These students attend almost 200 Catholic schools, 60 with another religious affilitiation, and about 80 schools without religious affiliation. Information on ethnic characteristics of independent school students was not available to the author. It is likely that independent enrollments will increase very slightly as a percent of the state's total, not because of increased numbers, but because of the continued decrease of public school enrollments for the next few years.

It is clear from these numbers that some things have changed in Connecticut. On both per pupil expenditure and teacher salaries, Connecticut increased its advantage over other states, although questions remain. One is the equitable distribution of funds *within* the state to ensure that every Connecticut child has an equitable chance at a good education. (Per capita wealth ranged from $36,250 in New Canaan to $8,677 in Hartford in 1987—an amazing income spread.) Another is that increases in teacher salaries (in current dollars) do not represent increases in purchasing power. Although there can be few complaints about Connecticut's per student funding, the resources are so great that one could suggest a greater level of *state* effort to assure greater equity in funding, particularly in Connecticut's five largest cities. Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport are all on the list of the top 20 cities in the U.S. with the highest percent of children living in poverty.

In terms of funding responsibility, Connecticut has followed the national trend of increased state and reduced local funding. It seems inevitable that when states provide more of the money, the legislature and governor will eventually want more of the decision authority that goes with it. The golden rule explains it—he who has the gold makes the rules. In Connecticut, with active local control and energetic school boards, this could produce conflicts in the near future. State funding of schools almost doubled from 1973–1985, while local funding fell from three quarters to one half. It would be hard to fault the general ideas and priorities in the bill passed by the legislature in June of 1986, known as An Act Concerning Educational Enhancement, which will provide about 300 million dollars over three years by focusing on the salary needs of teachers, improving certification systems and helping small towns and some cities. It *does*, however, provide less than adequate emphasis on Connecticut's cities where the educational issues seem to need the most state assistance.

CONNECTICUT AND U.S. SCHOOL INDICATORS

	Connecticut	U.S.
Per-pupil expenditures, 1973-74	$1,413	$1,147
Per-pupil expenditures, 1985-86	$4,888	$3,677
Average teacher salary, 1973-74	$11,805	$11,690
Average teacher salary, 1985-86	$26,610	$25,257
Funding percentage, 1973-74		
Federal	2.9%	8.2%
State	23.8%	42.6%
Local	73.3%	49.2%
Funding percentage, 1985-86		
Federal	4.9%	6.4%
State	40.5%	50.1%
Local	54.5%	43.5%
Per capita income, 1984	$16,556	$12,789
Children 5-17 in poverty, 1980	10.4%	15.3%
Pupil/teacher ratios, 1982	15/1	18.9/1
Pupil/teacher ratios, 1985	14.4/1	18.3/1
Percent handicapped, 1987	13.8%	11.0%
Percent gifted, 1984	2.4%	3.2%
Percent bilingual, 1984	5.5%	2.9%
Percent minority, 1987	23%	30%

This act, plus the the competency test for teachers known as CONNCEPT, put in place in 1985, indicate a real interest in upgrading the teaching force. In addition, the subject matter exams, known as CONNTENT, will be phased into 25 subject areas by 1990, while BEST (Beginning Education Support and Training Program) will provide essential support for beginning teachers. However, urban educational issues in the state, particularly youth poverty, remain unanswered at present.

Connecticut's very favorable student-teacher ratio of 14.4 to 1 in 1985 compares favorably to California's twenty-three students to one teacher! Only Wyoming, at 12.6 has smaller classes than Connecticut. However, other states with enrollment declines have also reduced student–teacher ratios simply by keeping teachers on the payroll even with a smaller number of students to teach. A real problem here is the increasing minority student population without a proportionate increase in minority faculty. However,

Connecticut is doing better in this regard than the nation in one sense—in 1986, minority professional staff actually increased slightly in Connecticut, up by 96 for a total of 2,260 or 6 percent of the 37,627 full-time professional staff members. (Nationally, the minority professional staff in public schools dropped from 12 to 9 percent, with a National Education Association prediction of below 6 percent in the next few years, due largely to a decline in the numbers of minority teacher education students in colleges.)

The figures on handicapped students indicate that Connecticut does a good job of identifying and diagnosing their special needs and providing appropriate instruction. Connecticut's work with the handicapped student has been excellent in these dimensions—how much they are learning is another question for which the data are not very clear. Similarly, the 2.4 percent gifted category does not mean that 2.4 percent of all Connecticut students are gifted, rather that 2.4 percent are enrolled in special classes and programs. It is interesting to observe that the bilingual percentage in Connecticut is almost twice the national average, due perhaps to the state mandate for bilingual programs in any school in which 20 or more students speak a particular language other than English.

Although the minority student percentage is below the national average, there are reasons for believing that in Connecticut, minority students and their families are more tightly bound to the central cities of the state, with very limited mobility to Connecticut's affluent suburbs. Given the inevitability of increased minority student populations, particularly Hispanic and Asian with steady numbers of black students, Connecticut's economic and social well-being will increasingly depend upon the ability of Connecticut's minorities to do well in school and college, and later in the workplace. Like most others, Connecticut's educational system has been used to *pick* winners rather than to *create* winners. The demography in Connecticut makes clear that in this state particularly, no young person can be *allowed* to fail.

Two additional factors present themselves in the form of (a) a rapidly increasing population of people over 65 and (b) an increase in jail populations in Connecticut, from 4,308 in 1980 to 6,149 in 1985. Both of these groups require very expensive services. In Connecticut $123 million is used annually to provide for prisoners in jails, money that could have built college dormitories or provided Head Start-type programs for the state's poor children.

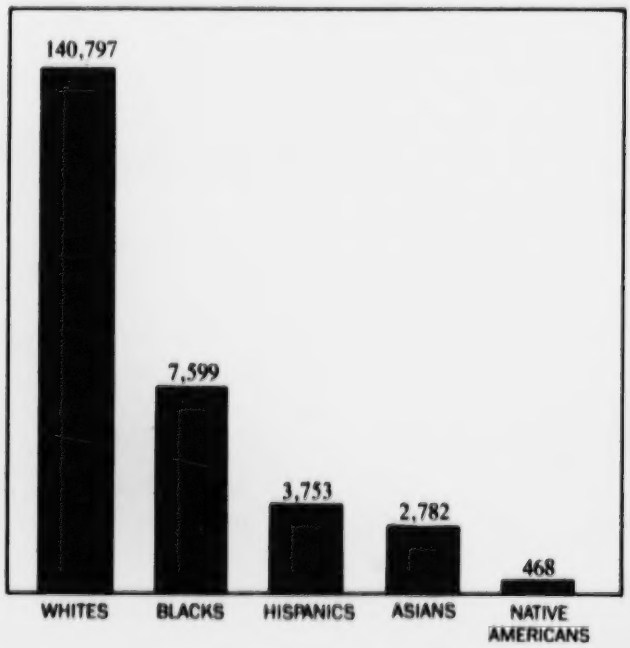
We have moved from having eight children to each older person in 1900 to about 2.5 children per older person today. The political dynamics will favor funding for the elderly and prisoner populations unless some major efforts are made to show the economic and social costs of *not* supporting education. (Head Start programs look expensive until you look at the costs associated with not having them.) Support of public schools needs to be seen as a *civic* responsibility in Connecticut, not just a parental responsibility.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN CONNECTICUT

As of 1986-87, Connecticut had 49 institutions of higher education, 24 public and 25 private. Included are two universities, one public and one private; 26 four-year institutions, 6 public and 20 private; and 21 two-year institutions, 17 public and 4 private. As of Fall, 1986, they enrolled a total of 159,071 students of whom 140,797 were white and 14,540 (9.1 percent) were minority. Included were 7,599 black students, 3,753 Hispanics, 2,782 Asians and 468 Native Americans. (The U.S. Department of Education also recorded 4,021 foreign students studying in the state.) 9.1 percent minority is below the national average of 17.4 percent minority college students, but is about average for the Northeast and represents a commendable *increase* over the 8.3 percent in 1984. But remember that 22 percent of Connecticut's public school students are minority!

From 1982 to 1984, current-fund expenditures for higher education in Connecticut moved upward by 11.4 percent, from $1,076,378,000 to $1,199,463,000, one of the highest increase rates in the nation. (The public institutional base grew 14.9 percent while private institutions grew 9.2 percent.) Tuition and fees for public institutions averaged $3,376 in 1984-85, about the national average, while Connecticut's private institutional tuition and fees averaged $10,769, second only to Massachusetts. However, four institutions that draw nationally—Connecticut College, Trinity, Wesleyan and Yale—push up the average. Connecticut's faculty earned an average of $36,464 in 1985-86, behind only Alaska ($42,696), California ($39,002) and

CONNECTICUT HIGHER EDUCATION ENROLLMENT, 1986



Massachusetts ($36,582). Interestingly, Connecticut's public and private faculties showed only a few dollars difference in salary. The *Statistical Abstract of the U.S., 1987* lists Connecticut as 8th in public higher education appropriations per F.T.E. student for 1986.

Given the very high level of participation in the SAT test (28,302 Connecticut students took the SAT in 1985, the highest participation rate in the nation, with above-average verbal and average math results), the state is clearly trying to develop a comprehensive education program, kindergarten through graduate school. In addition, almost half the students in Connecticut higher education, both public and private, are attending part-time, which usually means older students with jobs and families to juggle. Connecticut seems to be meeting their educational needs as well as the "conventional" student who is 18-22, in residence in college housing and full-time, a student type now clearly in the *minority* in higher education in the U.S.

However, there are some puzzles here. Most interesting is the high percentage of Connecticut high school graduates who leave the state to go to college—about 28 percent in 1981, down from 32 percent in 1975 but up to 34 percent of *all* 1986 Connecticut high school graduates. The "net" issue is clear—about 20,000 Connecticut students leave the state for college, while about 10,000 students who live in other states come to Connecticut for college, for a "net" loss of about 10,000 students. (The question of whether or not the students who leave Connecticut are any brighter than those who stay cannot be answered with present information.) Why do so many leave? Given the good balance of public and private colleges and universities in the state, as well as the good selection of degrees and programs, it cannot be that the education one wants cannot be found in Connecticut. There are several hypotheses, and the reader may have many more:

A. Connecticut higher education may be overpriced—one can get the same quality and variety in other states for less. Compared with Massachusetts and New York, Connecticut does not provide the same level of state-based loans and grants for students. Bright but poor students can "do better" in another state. (However, state aid is generally available only to residents of that state. This hypothesis seems unlikely.)

B. The *perceived* quality of Connecticut institutions may be low. Although Wesleyan and Yale are clearly "big league" schools, the University of Connecticut is seldom mentioned in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and the University of Hartford, although doing some very fascinating things, is perceived as a local institution without much larger significance. The state has quality control mechanisms in place, but *perceived* quality is not currently known.

C. The states with the highest rate of out-of-state college going are the New England and Mid-Atlantic states, especially Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Delaware, Vermont and Connecticut. These are all rather small states geographically, and if one of the functions of "going away to college" is to get away from home, it is difficult to do in New Jersey or Connecticut, as mom and dad are within a three-hour drive of any campus in the state! Indeed, in a 1984 survey of Connecticut high school seniors, 21 percent said that "getting away from home" was a major factor in their choice of an out-of-state college. Cost was a negligible factor in their choice. Option C seems the most likely factor.

In summary, the higher education system in Connecticut seems to be meeting the needs of Connecticut's citizens for postsecondary educational services. Some encouraging recent developments suggest increasing articulation and collaboration across the educational segments in Connecticut, especially the Common Core of Learning, improving transfer programs and teacher education, and the joint involvement of public and independent institutions in strategic planning. Promising starts have been made on cooperation between business, public schools and higher education, as well as the minority advancement program. What is *unclear* is how higher education will deal with the major demographic changes now moving through Connecticut—the large increase in older citizens, the major increase in minority youth, especially in Connecticut's cities, plus the continuing decline in the number (as well as percent) of white public school students.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Connecticut is very small, very dense, very old (average age of residents), very urban, very well-educated and very wealthy. The state has great social concern, very open politics, and a need to develop new revenue sources which would pay for social services. People leaving the state are mostly retirees seeking a lower cost of living, leaving the state even fuller of middle-year, two income families moving into their peak earning years. About 11 percent of the state's population is minority and about 25 percent of Connecticut's kindergarten population is. Because of a continuing decline in white populations, Connecticut's future will be increasingly minority. If one looks at the new entrants into the Connecticut workforce from now to the year 2000, six out of ten entrants will be women and four out of ten entrants will be minority. The state's autonomy is usually being hassled from Massachusetts on one end and New York on the other. One of the most inaccurate stereotypes about Connecticut is "the small town state" when 88 percent of its people live in 12 metropolitan areas.

Urban problems have been a major concern of Connecticut's business leaders over the years, and because the cities have not been drained of jobs and middle-income housing, it seems that Connecticut's cities can be developed further. The largest unanswered question for Connecticut involves low income residents. Although the Connecticut economy has a splendid high end and middle, there are thousands of jobs in Connecticut—cashiers, janitors, hotel maids and fast food workers for starters—who do essential work but are paid very little. Given the very high housing costs in the state, and the fact that existing tax structures are regressive and affect the working poor very severely, there is an issue of social and economic equity for the state to face.

The educational system needs to be viewed in this context, as does the state effort through government and business leaders. Here are some ways of focussing these issues that may be helpful to the state's considerable abilities and skills:

1. Connecticut's concern for education has simply been assumed as a given. Today, with fewer adults who have children in the schools, and given that the fastest growing segment of the state's population is people over 85, the state will have to be more active in making support of education a *civic* responsibility, not just a parental responsibility. Connecticut is not currently a leader in developing innovative programs that benefit its elderly citizens, but it will need to become one. In this regard, the relation of young and old, as accomplished in the educational programs of Fairfax County, Virginia, could provide some leads. (In Fairfax, many programs for seniors are run in the schools, and good use of senior talent is made in volunteer school programs, bringing closer contact between young and old.)
2. Major attention needs to be given to education in Connecticut's cities, particularly for the youngest citizens. Daycare services for working mothers is an important *educational* issue in the state, as is performance of city school children in the first years of school. The major factor here is poverty. (Prince George's County in Maryland has shown rather conclusively that middle-class minority children can perform academically at the same level as middle-class white kids. The issue is more class than race.) For the richest state in the nation in terms of per capita income, having one-fifth of its children born out-of-wedlock, and ten percent of its youth below the poverty line is unacceptable—because of the small number of kids in Connecticut, *every one* of them needs to succeed.
3. A related issue is the development of minority middle classes in Connecticut. Small business starts are an important part of Connecticut's future (more new jobs are created by small business than by Fortune 500 companies), and the state needs to work on minority-owned and operated small businesses. In addition, effective recruiting of minority citizens into state government has worked very effectively in Ohio, where the black middle class in Columbus is one of the largest in the country, much of it in state government positions. Connecticut has not been particularly successful in encouraging minorities to move to the suburbs, although the Fairfield data suggests that some change is happening. There is a focus here which could involve the state's community colleges, the Universities of Connecticut and Hartford, the public schools and business and government leaders.
4. The state does not have a youth policy, and it needs one. That would help Connecticut's public and private schools and colleges work together in a more coordinated way than is now the case. Connecticut is already planning to build more jails, which is a youth policy of sorts. (Remember that a prisoner costs about $20,000 a year to maintain, and that eighty percent of prisoners are high school drop-

outs.) It is time for this enlightened state to develop new revenue sources which are as nonregressive as possible. One benefit of such a venture would be more state scholarship dollars so that more of Connecticut's brightest high school graduates would decide to attend college in their home state.

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CONNECTICUT—SUMMARY OF MAJOR POINTS

1. Connecticut is a small, very densely populated state, first in per capita income, in part because of the high percentage of women who work outside the home, causing a major need for daycare services.
2. Connecticut sees itself as a small town state, even though 88 percent of its people live in the state's twelve metropolitan areas. Partly as a result, the three largest cities—Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport—do not get the concentrated attention and assistance they need. Corporate leadership has been very important in focusing on urban development in the state.
3. Connecticut's population is the fourth oldest, mainly because of its very small number of children. The fastest growing part of the population, however, is people over 85, which will force more trade-offs between programs for youth and those for senior citizens in the future, unless some action is taken now.
4. The state's very diverse economy allows it to ride through recessions very easily. However, the workers who are added to the workforce are sixty percent female and forty percent minority, and those percentages will increase in the future. Housing costs are so high that some of the advantages of high income levels are taken away. (That is one of the major reasons why people are not moving to Connecticut in droves to take advantage of the high levels of per capita income.)
5. The state's youth population has declined sharply for a decade, but a turn around has already begun in the early elementary grades. However, the increase in kids will be heavily minority youth, and is likely to be in Connecticut's cities rather than in suburbs or towns. Connecticut needs to keep a sharp eye out for increasing poverty among its youth, a very likely development.
6. Connecticut has a diverse and flexible educational system, from kindergarten through graduate school, but it is not articulated or coordinated in particularly effective ways. Some recent activity like *Fairfield 2000* may point the way in collaboration between schools, colleges, business and government. The state's wonderful tradition in technical innovation has never been matched with achievements in *social* innovation. Given the state's great wealth, small size, highly educated citizens, traditions of open and honest government, as well as business leadership and support, it may be time for Connecticut to assume more of a national role as it increases its efforts to solve the state's problems in a creative way that might be a model for other states. This cannot happen without adequate state funding for the solution of Connecticut's problems.